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Nault, Julia (Davis) oral history interview

Andrea L'Hommedieu

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Interview with Julia (Davis) Nault by Andrea L'Hommedieu

Summary Sheet and Transcript

Interviewee

Nault, Julia (Davis)

Interviewer

L'Hommedieu, Andrea

Date

May 7, 2002

Place

Bangor, Maine

ID Number

MOH 341

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Biographical Note

Julia (Davis) Nault was born in Machias, Maine in 1934 to Edrie and Julian Davis. Her mother was a housewife, and her father worked in the wholesale beef business. Her father was an active Democrat in the Machias area, and worked with Ed Muskie at the Office of Price Stabilization. She married Mark Nault and returned to Maine in 1964. Her husband was the editor of the *Machias Times*. She was active in Democratic politics and served as a director of the U.S. Census one year, and served on the Maine Legal Needs Commission with Ed Muskie.

Scope and Content Note

Interview includes discussions of: Machias in the 1930s; Julian Davis; candidates visiting the Julian home; Lucia Cormier; Kennedy convention in 1960; issues growing up; Muskie at the Office of Price Stabilization (OPS); activism in the Davis home; escorting Muskie around various places; Muskie's mode of thought; Campobello (RCIPC); Muskie's enthusiasm about Campobello; Muskie on the Maine Legal Needs Commission; Muskie's impatience with foolish thought; Gayle Cory; Cianchette family; Muskie's kindness to his loyal supporters; and Muskie's Edsel.

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Transcript

Andrea L'Hommedieu: This is an interview with Ms. Julia L. Nault at her home in Bangor, Maine. The date is May the 7th, the year 2002, and this is Andrea L'Hommedieu. Could you start just by giving me your full name, including your name, and spelling them?

Julia Nault: Okay, I'm Julia Nault, I was Julia Davis, you want the spelling of the names?

AL: Yes.

JN: Davis, D-A-V-I-S, Nault, N-A-U-L-T.

AL: And where and when were you born?

JN: I was born in 1934 in Machias.

AL: And is that where you grew up?

JN: I did, yes.

AL: And what was that community like?

JN: Well, it was a typical small town. I was very active in all the different organizations. I think they're not as big there now as they were back when I was growing up. But of course the economy was pretty much natural resource based, fishing, lumbering, that kind of thing. My father was in the wholesale beef business and so that's what we did for a living. And I say 'we' because the whole family was involved, yes.

AL: And what were your parents' names?

JN: Edrie and Julian Davis.

AL: And how do you spell those names?

JN: E-D-R-I-E, and Julian, J-U-L-I-A-N.

AL: And it was a family business?

JN: Well, yes, my mother and father owned it, and they also had a grocery store and filling station, and so they used all of us as we got big enough to help out.

AL: And how many brothers and sisters did you have?

JN: I have two brothers and a sister.

AL: And, so tell me about your parents, were they involved in the community outside of their businesses?

JN: Yes, they were, organizations and. But politically most, I mean they were very (*unintelligible word*) in politics. But they were involved in the school with the, you know, things that affected the family, that kind of thing.

AL: What sort of community was Machias in terms of politics? Was it heavily Democrat, Republican?

JN: In the early, early days it was very Republican. Going way back, it had been quite Democratic, and then as Maine, you know, it was quite Republican. Machias was very Republican. In fact, back in those days it was very difficult to find any Democrats, you know,

that's why when we were small we were all used in campaigns, and many of the candidates stayed at our house because there wasn't the money back in those days, so I grew up around the politicians.

AL: How early do you have memories of being involved?

JN: Oh, being very, very small, very small indeed. In fact, my father ran for office, I believe it was right after my sister was born, and she's two years younger than me. I don't recall that campaign, but as for as long as I can remember, that has always been a political activity at home.

And there were so few Democrats that the Machias community, you know, in terms of having a town committee (we did), but it was more the whole county, you know, the county committee that was the more important of the organization.

AL: Can you give recollections of some of the people who stayed at your home, or candidates that you met in those early years?

JN: Oh, certainly I can. Going back to people like Ken Colbath, that's when the old third congressional district, I can remember him. I can remember Davis Clark, he also ran for

AL: He was a judge, right?

JN: Uh-hunh, and Lucia Cormier when she ran for the United States Senate. I can remember Paul Julian.

AL: (*Unintelligible phrase*).

JN: Oh my word! I mean I go back a long way.

AL: Well, some of these people we don't have the ability to interview in this day and age, but any characterizations you can give me of them, Lucia Cormier, for instance, what were your impressions of her?

JN: Oh, I was, I thought she was a delightful lady. And the story I have on Lucia, I was living in California and my husband and I came home on vacation, and it was the year that John Kennedy was running for the nomination for president. I said to her, she came to the house, my mother's and father's, and I said, "Oh, I would love to get in to the convention." And she said, "Just come on to the convention, ask for me, and I'll see that you get in." And she did. And so we were there the night that he was nominated.

AL: Oh, wow. What was that night like?

JN: Oh, well, you know, I really didn't think Kennedy could win because I thought the Catholic issue was going to be major. It was, but, so I rather was looking (*unintelligible phrase*), you know, I think, but the old New England came out of me when I started hearing the roll call and everything. And I got so excited by the time he got the nomination. It was really fun, it was

an exciting, exciting experience. But that was my story with Lucia.

But in terms of characterizing, I don't know, I was young, you know, with many of these people. They were just, I was always fascinated, used to sit and listen to all the discussions. And we'd always have meetings at my folks' home. And I always found, listening to all the different discussions and points of view, exciting. And then when I went to college I, political science was my major. I just always have had an interest and have been involved. When we lived in California I was involved in the Party, and then when we moved to Virginia and I was on the city committee in Fairfax there, was involved. And then came back to Maine and, you know, it's in the blood.

AL: So were there a lot of political discussions around your dinner table growing up?

JN: Yes, yes, exactly.

AL: Do you remember what sort of issues were talked about that were important to your parents?

JN: Well, yes, I can think of a lot of them, you know, going back. Let's see, I would say in Maine, the paper companies and their control of, you know, what went on in Maine. I think that was a major thing with my folks. Oh, it's difficult to come and say this was major, that wasn't. Of course, social security was always a, you know, but back then it was not the issue that it is today, I mean, because it had not been going that many years. Oh, let's see, I'd have to really give that some thought I guess to really come up with things. But it was things like, well one thing I can remember was a really big thing was, in those [days] Maine used to, when we used to vote we always had the big box at the top. And so of course my parents were very upset about that, because so many people would just go in and vote that big box above the Republican column. And so we, you know, that was another issue they fought, to get rid of the big box. And that finally of course happened. Oh, you know, things like this that were -

AL: And you mentioned Paul Julian? Who was he?

JN: He ran for Governor; he was from Waterville.

AL: What year did he run for Governor?

JN: Oh my word, oh my word.

AL: Like after Davis Clark?

JN: Oh no, before.

AL: Before.

JN: Oh yes, oh yes, I was quite young, yes.

AL: Okay, okay, so before World War II then.

JN: And he, and, well you've heard of Louis Jalbert.

AL: Yes.

JN: Yes, well that was, you know, he was from Lewiston, I think Jalbert was from Lewiston, no, yeah, Lewiston. And, and of course Louis Jalbert. And he used to, Louis used to come down through a lot, you know, trying to raise money and -

AL: What were your impressions of Louis Jalbert?

JN: *(No verbal response.)*

AL: Um, let's talk about when you first met Senator Muskie, who was then maybe in the Maine Legislature, or when was *(unintelligible word)*?

JN: Well no, let me tell you when I first met him, my folks knew him much before I did, but I was in high school. And my father, as you know he headed up the Office of Price Stabilization, and my father was in the office. He handled the beef, you know, going out and checking *(unintelligible word)*. I've always felt that from that group, Senator Muskie sort of got the group together that helped get him elected governor, and right after that of course he did run for governor. And I used to go down, you know, to Portland and stay with my father, stay in Portland, and so I would go down and that was my first exposure to Senator Muskie, is during that time. And then of course he ran for office and, as I say, used to stay at our house a lot and so forth.

AL: So, during the OPS days is when you first -?

JN: When I first met him, yeah. I was in high school.

AL: And then, so you became an admirer, or a supporter?

JN: You know, I think we all kind of felt like he was part of the family, you know. He, I mean we all felt close to him because he came and stayed so much, and we saw so much of him during the campaigns and that kind of thing. And so it was, both he and Jane came and stayed a lot.

AL: And what sorts of things did your parents do in support of his campaign, like going door to door?

JN: Oh, my word, they did everything, I mean they raised money, they put on func-. In fact, one of the first campaign events was in Washington County at Howard's Red Barn in Milbridge, and of course my folks helped with it. I'm saying, back in those days there weren't very many people, and so they really had to do a lot of legwork. And that's why they used us in terms of passing out literature and all kinds of different things. But they did everything, you know, they put them up overnight, they fed them, they held, used their house for meetings, you name it they

did it in their travels up and down Washington county.

In the later years, when I was going to put on an event down there, I'd always say to my father, "Oay, get out on the road with tickets and go." And he did it, you know, never stopped. So, yes, he was, he worked very long and hard for Senator Muskie, that's of course, of every election. In fact, I don't think Senator Muskie ever lost Washington County, he carried it every time.

AL: You knew Senator Muskie more personally than a lot of people.

JN: Yes.

AL: Was he a different Ed Muskie when he was sort of relaxed and socializing than on the campaign trail?

JN: Well, you know, if you go back to the early days of campaigning, we had the candidates then, and we could take them around and see the people. I mean, you could take them into a little store and there'd be a group of people sitting around. And the senator would sit up on the counter there and, you know, just, they'd toss questions at him and he, and he was good at that. And not too long ago a lady who is in her eighties, she said this to me several times, but she said, "I can see, she goes a long ways, of Ed Muskie going up now," she said, "up that midway." My father used to take them to all the fairs down there, "and your father practically running trying to keep up with him." And that's the way he was, you know, he just could take off.

And another funny story about his long legs, when I was living in Virginia my folks came down and so we were going in to meet him, I mean to his office, and then we were going to go and have lunch. And he decided we should go down, it was, he had gotten an office in the basement of the Capitol building, you know, those, offices that were kind of hidden away. So we had to take the little train over from the office building over to the Capitol. And so he and my father were sitting in the seat ahead and my mother and I sat in back, and so of course he jumps off and my father behind him and they start, and I said to my mother, "Come on, let's hurry before we lose him down here, I wouldn't know what to do." So when we got into his office, I reached for my purse and I had left it on this train. So we called up and Gayle Cory went down and looked, and it was sitting right where I'd left it. Can you believe it, but it was. And I thought, this man doesn't wait for anything, you know, he just takes off, he doesn't, you know, because he's talking and they're discussing issues.

So, yes, and he would come to my house, and he and my father, and he would play the devil's advocate a little bit, you know, with my father, and they would, they would really get into some hot discussions. And basically agreeing on the issues but, you know, just going at it. So, yes, he was very relaxed.

Another story about being relaxed, I think when he got into something he, you know, was so excited about it. And as you know, he was on the commission for Roosevelt Park, and so one day, I don't remember why his driver didn't take him down, but he brought him to Machias, and so my husband said, oh, I'll drive you down to Campobello. So he did, and when they got down there it was getting dark, but the senator was so excited about the renovations that were going on

there with these homes that he got a flashlight and went over and started trying windows until he found one that opened. You know, they weren't completed, it was in the process. And so they crawled in through the windows and he's showing Mark all these wonderful things that are going on there.

So, you know, yeah, he was, he was, yes, relaxed, and also could be very focused, you know, when he was in discussions. And he was good at listening to what people locally said. You know not, listening and hearing what they said. I think that was a great ability that he had, to understand, and how different the state is and the different needs in the state. So, yes.

AL: You know, I had a question and you might be able to answer this because of all the discussions you probably heard between Muskie and your parents. Did you get a sense of how Senator Muskie approached issues and sort of thought them through? When he discussed, did you get a sense of how he was thinking through and approaching -?

JN: Well, I think what I just said, in terms of if it was, if it was something that involved the state, he would, I think he would listen to what my father had to say about the point of view from that area. Then he would go to, say, somebody like Perry Furbush down in Palmyra who was one of those Office of Price Stabilization people. Or, say, Frank Coffin, or any of those people that, that he, and I think he would take what each one said and then kind of distill all of that until he finally came up with a position that he felt was a good, good

And he was very loyal to his early supporters, too, very. I think he never, ever, you know, he came to my father's funeral, he and Jane, and came to see my mother after my father died. And I just think, you know, he never forgot those people who really kind of helped him, you know, get on the way. So, yes, I think he was a very good listener, and of course he was very, very intelligent, you know, he could distill things very quickly, you know, he was fast.

And, my father though could be a very difficult person to, he would ask questions around and around, you know. Finally Ed would say, "Julian, what are you trying to tell me?" But they got along famously, so yeah, he, I would say, I think he did.

Now, if it was a national thing. I remember when they needed funds for the Machias Hospital, to get it started. And I think they had tried, some of the people had tried with Margaret Chase Smith, and anyway finally they call my father and talk to him, and so he calls Senator Muskie. It was the Hilburton Funds. And so, I don't know whether my father was altogether happy about actually getting this money. But the Senator convinced my father that this was important, you know, and so it could work the other way around, too. And I'm not sure, I wasn't, I was away at the time so I didn't hear all of those discussions, except for when my father would discuss them. And so in fact he did get the money that started the Machias, Downeast Community Hospital. So.

AL: Did you have any contact with Senator Muskie in relation to the Roosevelt Campobello International Park Commission, or the park itself?

JN: Well yes, I mean he used to stop always when he would go down there. We went down

for different dedications. I didn't go to all of them because I was living away at the time, I didn't, we didn't move back until 1967. But yes, the, well as I told you the story about Mark taking him down and going through. He also invited us down at the time of the oil refinery hearings, downeast, they had a cocktail party down at one of the newly renovated homes at Campobello, and so he asked us to come down for that. They had all the oil people in there and, you know, the different companies that were thinking of building this port. And so we went down for that. If that's what you mean in terms of connections through the park.

AL: Sure. Did you know the MacNichols?

JN: Oh yes.

AL: Alex and Genevieve, and their children?

JN: Yes, absolutely. I remember Alex being, he was a wild man behind the wheel. No wanted to ride, or at least I didn't want to ride with him.

AL: This is the son, not the father?

JN: No, it was the father.

AL: Oh, it was.

JN: Yes, yes absolutely.

AL: Because they were very involved.

JN: Yes, they certainly were, yeah, they were.

AL: Did you sort of grow up with the sons, or not? Because the geography was -?

JN: No, I did not. I knew them, but you know. I knew, had met them and everything, but no, in terms of being close. Let's see, Ellen and Jim live in Eastport, right, Eastport?

AL: Yeah.

JN: Sometimes my old age. Yeah, yes, yes, I do remember them very well.

AL: Now, when was the next time, or if we're going chronologically, when you have recollections of Senator Muskie?

JN: All through those years, because he always came. And the last time I saw Senator Muskie was the day of his birthday party, and Mark and I were going to, we were one of the hosts of the, of that party. And then Mark died the week before. And so Nancy Chandler called me and she said, "You have to come." And I said, "No, I can't." And she said, "Yeah, you do." And so finally my son said, "Yes mum, go." So I went, and that was the last time I saw him. And he

wrote me a letter when my mother died, a long letter, he didn't know she had died, and it took one month for me to receive the letter, after it postmarked until I received it, and I said, "Even the mighty have trouble with the U.S. Post Office." But anyway, I saw him all through, I was on the legal affairs, you know, that -

AL: The Maine Commission on Legal Needs?

JN: Yeah, legal needs.

AL: Tell me what that was all about, what was the purpose of it, and what was Senator Muskie's role in -

JN: Well, because he chaired the committee. And for me, it was a major education for me. But we were trying to assess the needs of the poor, the elderly, you know. And how little access they have to legal, to the legal profession. I mean you had some, you know, had a quite a few lawyers doing some pro bono work, but the actual access to a lawyer, I mean they just had very little. And of course he handled the whole thing extremely well. The details of the report and all of that, you know, off the top of my head. I've been on so many of these things over the years. But that was basically what that was about, and how do you address getting more so that these people can have, you know. And sometimes it's minor things, but they're in desperate need of legal help. And, you know, Pine Tree Legal could only handle just so much, and I think that at that point they had been cut back rather substantially in funding. So that was of course the purpose of the, and then there was *(unintelligible phrase)* after that that I, you know, didn't really keep up with that much in terms of legislation. But that, but that's, his role was to chair and bring the whole thing together.

AL: Do you recollect how, in what way he did that?

JN: You mean how he -?

AL: What was his style?

JN: As chairing the... Well I thought he did a very good job of including people in the questioning thing, you know, and then drawing out from people who were testifying. You know, he was very, very, I thought gentle in terms of, because some of these stories were very, you know, heart breaking. And he did it in a way that I think made people give the whole story. And yes, I thought he did a very good job of handling, you know, the different people who were testifying in that.

AL: What other time periods and interactions did you have with him that you can talk about that illustrate who he was and your relationship with him?

JN: Well, I went down to the house in Kennebunk? Oh my gosh, *(unintelligible phrase)*.

AL: In Kennebunkport?

JN: Yes, Kennebunkport. Went down there for a meeting, I've forgotten now exactly. As I say, I have been so involved with so many different things. Now that may have been this legal needs, I have to think. I remember Elmer Violette was there. It might have been for this legal needs thing.

AL: That's okay, it doesn't -

JN: And they have been, you know, the usual, I mean, things where you would, all political. Not all political, of course not. But if you're talking, you're referring to me now, yeah, over these years. Well just the kind of things I guess I've told you, that, because nothing in particular that comes to mind on that at the moment. It was just, it's like, I'm not quite sure I think I know what you're wanting.

AL: Sure. Hold on just a second.

JN: For instance, if somebody said something that he found to be off the wall, you know, really outrageous, and I have seen Senator Muskie's temper. Because I don't think he suffered fools easily. That's the way he came across to me. But I never saw him be angry to the point that, you know, I... You've heard stories about his temper, and I, yeah, I've heard my father shout and, you know, about issues and so forth. But it was just kind of a, emphasizing his point of view, that's how his temper for me came across. And in public meetings, yes, if there was something happened that, and somebody got up and made a statement that he knew was totally, like at the oil refinery hearings. If someone got up and made a statement that was way off base and he knew it was, yeah, he would, he would, if they would say it in an accusatory way or something, you know, he would, yeah, he would lose his temper. And I'm sure, you know, that a lot of people have seen that more than I have.

But for me it was always, you know, because it was more relaxed and friendly atmospheres that I've seen him at, except for that oil refinery hearing and the legal needs commission. I don't recall, though, during those hearings that I ever saw him flare up. Now, he may have, but you know, memory fades and it's been a while. And as I say I, you know, I've been on so many things that I sometimes forget. But no, I think he, well I've seen it. It's not been, it's not been like some people describe it, you know.

One time I, he was at the house and we had a meeting, and I had fallen and hurt my tail bone and I was really hurting. And Mark came out to the car to get me because I had a phone call, my folks. So, and I knew the Senator was in there, but I just didn't feel up to getting out of the car, you know. So I was so angered with Mark for making me come to the telephone. And so I went through the door just sputtering at him, and Ed looked up at me, he said, "Make me feel right at home." And I said, "Well you are." But he could be funny, he could be real funny, you know, quite witty.

But I think the people really admired him because he was prepared to stand up and say what he thought. I find so much today that people are trying to say what they think people want to hear and not what they need to hear. And he was the type that told it like he saw it I think, you know. You knew where he stood and you didn't have to second guess that at all. And whether that was

in private, or whether that was in public, I think he pretty much -

AL: You mentioned Gayle Cory, and of course she was from Maine. Did you know her?

JN: Oh yes, oh, sure I did.

AL: Besides being in Senator Muskie's office?

JN: Yes, I, well no, no, I knew Gayle -

AL: That's how you met her?

JN: Oh yes, yeah, she was Gayle Fitzgerald when I met her, yeah, Gayle Fitzgerald when I met her, and then of course she got married. And yes, so I'd known Gayle over a number of years. And then the last time I talked to her was when my father died I think, I talked to her on the phone, I think that was the last time I talked to Gayle. And I was so sad when I heard she had passed away.

AL: What was she like?

JN: Oh she was (*unintelligible word*), I really liked her. She was kind of, with me, always, bubbly and, you know, I mean I just, I really liked Gayle. I didn't obviously see a lot of her because, you know, she was working in Washington. And when I was in Virginia, if I had occasion to go in or call, she would, you know, I'd get to chat with her. And then, as I say, she called when my father died. That was my last conversation with Gayle, and that was back in '83. But I, yes, I enjoyed Gayle, you know, when I had the opportunity to see her.

AL: Were there others associated with Senator Muskie that you knew over the years, besides who we've spoken of?

JN: Oh yes. You mean people, yes, a lot, you know, a lot of those earlier people that were involved in the campaigns. And we would laugh about the different things that took place. When I'd bump into these people, you know, they were friends of my father's and I would see them. And of course I knew all of them because of, people like Carl Cianchette, you know, from Pittsfield.

AL: Who was that?

JN: Carl, Carl, well they call him, I call him Cianchette [*chinchet*] but they call it Cianchette [*chinket*], you know, Cianbro, you know, Carl was one of the brothers, and he used to be extremely active back in those days. And so we would go to all the conventions, and we used to say, you know, you could hold the Democratic convention in a telephone booth in those days. I don't think that, I think that was an exaggeration, but anyway, there weren't that many people then. So -

AL: Now that's the same family where the son or, is running on the [*sic*] Democratic ticket

now?

JN: No, no, Peter's running as a Republican.

AL: I mean, Republican is what I meant to be saying.

JN: Yes, yes, that's right, yeah. And you know, I'm not quite sure which one, maybe it's Ival because Ival is a Republican, but Chuck Cianchette, you know, Alton, the one that was killed in a plane crash, he was always a Democrat. And in fact I had quite an argument with him one night up here, at Bangor actually was pulling my leg, and it was Ken Curtis was going to run against George Mitchell, after George had gotten the nomination. And he, finally he said to me, Julia, I'm George's treasurer. Because I thought he was going, he was saying, "Well I think Ken should run against George." And of course I didn't think so because I didn't want to lose, you know, I didn't want a big primary battle. I loved Ken, but I, you know, just didn't want him to run against George. And Ken, the other brother. The only time I ever met him I guess was at a Democratic convention. But yeah, that whole family except for Ival were all Democrats. And so, yes, yeah.

AL: Were there any campaigns that you were involved in that particularly stick out for one reason or another?

JN: No, they were all hard work. Of course the first one when he was elected governor, that was. And I was, you know, on the fringes of that because I was young, and so. But yeah, that was a pretty exciting time. You can't imagine (*unintelligible phrase*) the Democratic party when he won. And it was hard fought, but it was done without too much money either. You know, it was back when people actually got to see the candidate and do, actually face to face find out what they were thinking, not listening to thirty second spots on the television which doesn't tell you really anything. And so that was a major breakthrough. And of course, that's when the Democratic party came into its own in Maine, and has been building since then. I think Democrats owe Ed Muskie a very big debt of gratitude.

Another thing that I recall was when I, I was, I worked on the 1980 census in Hancock and Washington County. And I had been over in Augusta for a meeting, I was on the state board of education, and I was coming back to the Bangor office. And on the radio they said that Senator Muskie had just been, had just said he was accepting the Secretary of State position, and I cried all the way to Bangor. I said, this is the end of an era, (*unintelligible phrase*). And then another story about his, when he was Secretary of State, one day I, at home, I got a telephone call from someone and they said, "Julia, what's going on down at your mother's and father's?" I said, "What are you talking about?" And they said, "Well there are men fanned out all over the yard down there." It was a big yard, right on Route 1. And so I said, "Well let me go find out." So I hung up the phone, raced out to the car, jumped, they were only about a quarter of a mile away. Got there, and the Senator was there, he was on his way to Campobello, and he was Secretary of State. And so he, you know, all these Secret Service people were there. Well, in a small town like Machias you can imagine that that would create something of a stir. People standing out in the yard at my folks. I guess they thought that they were taking over the place. So I walk in and I looked at him, I said, "Oh, it's you." And then he laughed when I told him I'd gotten the phone

call, you know, he laughed, he thought that was a riot.

But that's the kind of thing I guess, you know, that you recall, you know, all these little, there are so many of them. I still have the wedding gift they sent me, you know, they sent me silver candle sticks and I still have them. And just little, you know, things like this that you think about a lot. It was a, I guess more of a personal thing almost more than, although the political was very important too, because of what he accomplished, and some of the reasons for his accomplishing it. You know, like angering Lyndon Johnson who puts him on the what he thinks is a nothing committee, and then, you know, the senator builds a career of it. I mean, that's being very smart and saying, okay, I'll show you, you know, type thing. So, yes, the political was very important.

And of course I always felt, in fact I used to wonder if I had been, in the south, if I had, would have been a Republican. Not from a philosophical point of view, but because Maine was so Republican, and I am a firm believer in a strong two-party system, that it's necessary. You need that balance to be checking, because frankly, Maine had just gotten to the point where almost anything went. And in, there was nobody, there wasn't a large enough group that could really, didn't challenge.

You know, I can tell you a story about, in terms of Republicans in the state. But, my father, back during the war, as I told you was in the wholesale beef business, and a distributor for Cuddy Packing Company. And he, because things were tough during the war, as you can well imagine, he wanted a slaughter license. You know, I witnessed this, so what I'm saying is absolutely, I saw it. He kept trying and trying and he couldn't get one. One day a man came from Augusta, and he walked into our kitchen, and he looked at my father and he said, "If you will change your enrollment, you will have your slaughter license tomorrow." I will never forget that, I was so frightened. My father hit the kitchen table, I mean it was a big kitchen table because there were six of us, and it was heavy, he hit that so hard that it bounced, literally, and he told the man, he said, "There's the door." He said, "I will never change my enrollment to get a slaughter license." And that's the way it was. I mean if you changed your enrollment and became a Republican, then you could get what you wanted. Well finally a doctor in town who was a Republican told my father, "We'll get this slaughter license." And so he applied for it with my father, and got it. You know, and those are the kinds of things I remember. And I just find that reprehensible, that they would suggest that you could have something if you changed your enrollment.

But back in those days it was very, very, very prevalent. I know the State Highway Department the same way. Not just you but your family was all expected to change, if you got a job on the state highway. It was bad. So all of that changed, and now I feel like there's a, not that bad things don't go on and that sort of thing, I mean I'm sure they still do, but I think that the balance helps. And of course I think we have Ed Muskie to thank for it, for that. And a lot of people who helped him a lot, people like Paul Fullam and, oh, so many names.

AL: Did you know Dick McMahon?

JN: Yes, yes, he was at the Office of Price Stabilization, too. I didn't know Dick as well, but yeah, he was down there. And Milt Fuller, Milt Glazer, and, yes, and I just, you know, those

people I didn't know well. Now Perry Furbush I did, because Perry continued to come to our house a lot, and my folks would go to their house, and Perry was from Palmyra, he was a lawyer.

AL: A lawyer.

JN: Uh-hunh, and he was in the office, too, with them. And remember, but back then I was in high school, and so I had other things besides knowing these people. But I will tell you a funny story. They all liked the races, and my father, after Senator Muskie was elected governor, went on the Harness Race Commission. And so I would go down to Portland to stay with my father and so a bunch of them were going to go out to the races. And one night, I think it was Perry and Milt Fuller, Milt Glazer, my father and me. And on the way home I was the only one that had money left in my pockets. I had to buy the coffee. Oh, dear. But, you know, I didn't know those people as well, except for Perry, of course, because they were casual, you know, meeting and that kind of thing. But yes, I do remember all of them.

AL: Let me flip the tape over, I just have a few more questions.

JN: Okay.

End of Side A

Side B

AL: We are now on Side B of the interview with Julia Nault. And we were talking about some of the people you've known. Perry Furbush, you knew him quite well.

JN: Yes, oh yes, Perry I knew very well. In fact, he did Mark and my first wills. He used to come down and stay with us, you know, for, and was a real friend over the years, and as I say, I knew his wife Marion, (*unintelligible phrase*). But this whole group, you know, they used to, I remember Tom Friedman, not well, on Presque Isle, but Greg Friedman's father was one of them that was working, and of course Elmer Violette whom I just loved. And I saw Marcella not very long ago, she's over in (*name*), and I'm so surprised. Anyway, yes, and you know, all these names that I've known over the years. I always thought it was, when they, Elmer Violette didn't win that Senate, that Maine had really lost a super person. He was a jewel, I just loved Elmer, and Marcella; they were very, really nice people.

AL: Was, did, Floyd Harding (*unintelligible phrase*)?

JN: Floyd, yeah, and, yeah, Floyd, Sr., yes, uh-hunh, knew them, yeah, sure did.

AL: Because they were very active in those years.

JN: Very, yeah, uh-hunh.

AL: Now, did you ever go up to the county during campaigns, or did you pretty much stay in your area of the state and saw people when they came through?

JN: Oh no, I, basically, we did Washington county during that campaign. And my folks went to New Hampshire when the Senator was running for -

AL: In '76?

JN: Yes, they went down there and helped campaign. But I didn't, I mean, I had two small children and I was involved with the State Board of Education and I mean all the activities, and we had our own business, and so I just couldn't take the time. But I would love to have gone but I just couldn't, but anyway they went and spent some time down there campaigning.

AL: I have a question for you. I know we've found pockets of Ku Klux Klan demonstrations in different parts of the state. Did you have any memories of that in Washington County?

JN: No, I do not, no, I do not.

AL: And not, no hearing about it from older generation?

JN: Oh yeah, in terms of, you mean the Catholic issues way back?

AL: Yes.

JN: Oh well, of course, that was a whispered thing all over, yes, yes, oh yes, definitely, definitely, in Washington County. But no, did I ever see any demonstrations or anything.

AL: No.

JN: Never, nor did I ever hear of one, and I'm sure I would have if they had occurred.

AL: But it was known there was a strong anti Catholic feeling?

JN: Yes, yes, definitely. And I remember when Kennedy was elected, you know, coming home, you know, (*unintelligible phrase*). But yes, definitely, very strong.

AL: I'm thinking of one person in particular who was Republican and sort of controversial, was Ralph Owen Brewster. Did you ever meet him, or -?

JN: Yes, I did.

AL: - have an, get an impression of him?

JN: No, I didn't. Because of course I was young. But yeah, (*unintelligible phrase*). Because he went by Owen later, and, but yes, I did see him once.

AL: And your parents knew him?

JN: Well, they didn't -

AL: I mean knew who he was.

JN: Oh absolutely, oh yes, oh yes.

AL: Are there things I haven't asked you that you think are important to add today that I've missed or skipped over?

JN: No, I think we touched on just about everything. I think that the characteristics that stick out to me was, his loyalty to the people who knew him, had been loyal to him, and that was maintained to the very end. And I think that when he did something that he was truly enthusiastic about what he was doing, like the case of the Campobello thing, I think he could almost be like a little boy in his enthusiasm for what was happening. And, I mean, I don't have to say that he was a truly dedicated to public person and, and I think served the State of Maine very well. And I don't think there's any question when you look around that people feel that way. I was reminded that, you know, people, the smallest thing that they could say about their exposure to Ed Muskie. I was reminded of my aunt, brother's mother-in-law, who's told everybody how thrilled she was that Ed Muskie ate one of her molasses cookies.

I mean, just the tiniest thing, but it was, and it's like the lady that tells the story about watching my father and Ed walk the fairgrounds eating hotdogs and so forth. And she would say the same thing, that she was so thrilled that she was able to cook a hotdog for him, you know, she had a place at the fairgrounds. And, you know, just the way he, and I've heard more people say, "Oh," you know, "I saw Ed Muskie, I did this, or he did this," or something. And I think that was something that meant so much to these people, and they would tell you, you know, that it was important to them that you know how they felt. Yes, I think those are the things that stick out in my mind about him. That he, he could, I think probably to some people be intimidating at moments, you know, just by who he was. And not probably intending to be, but I think people who are very bright and have a lot going sometimes can be intimidating to people. But he also had that gracious way of making people feel that it was important what they had done for him, and that was a special moment for them, if that makes sense.

AL: Yes.

JN: So, those are the ways I, I have a lot of fond memories, and for Jane, too. She was a really, really lovely lady.

AL: Did you ever know Don Nicoll?

JN: Yes, I've met Don, I sure have.

AL: Do you remember him back in the '50s during that campaign?

JN: Yes, yeah, right. In fact, I can't tell you the last time I saw him, it's been a long, long time. A long time. Frank Coffin the same way. I did see Frank someplace, I've forgotten where, but at some function I saw him last, sometime back, a long time. But you know, there are so many

people that I have met that obviously aren't going to come to mind that were back in those, those early days. They all came, when we came to Washington County, here we got to see all of them, and like I said, many of them stayed with us. Did anyone ever tell you the story about the Edsel that Ed owned?

AL: I don't think so.

JN: He was out campaigning and it broke down, you know, you remember the old Edsel, you know, they folded.

AL: Yeah, they folded.

JN: And it broke down, and we had to push him in road wherever it was that he was going. Oh gosh, it was fun. He took a lot of teasing about that Edsel, I'll tell you. That was (*unintelligible word*).

AL: It broke down a lot?

JN: Yes, yes. Yes, indeed. But I'm sure you know, there are just so many things that probably I could... The minute you leave I'll think of something that I wanted to say and haven't said it. But again, I think it's probably just all the happy memories and, and I'm sure a lot of people share that. I'm sure you've talked to a lot of people, like I do, about him and his service.

AL: Thank you very much for your time.

End of Interview